

2011

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### **Recommended Citation**

Gountas, John; Dolnicar, Sara; and Gountas, Sandra: Personality and motivation matter in touring holidays: a preliminary investigation into heterogeneity among touring travelers 2011, 329-342.  
<https://ro.uow.edu.au/commpapers/1937>

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### Abstract

Touring travelers represent a significant market in Australia and are expected to play an even larger role in the future. Yet, to date, they are viewed and treated like one large homogeneous market. The aim of the present study was to question this assumption and investigate whether distinct segments exist among touring travelers. Results, based on an empirical study of 430 Australian travelers, indicate that at least two distinct segments can be constructed which differ in travel motivations, sociodemographics, and personality characteristics. These findings can be used to segment and harvest the market of tourist travelers through the development of targeted products and marketing messages.

### Keywords

Personality, motivation, matter, touring, holidays, preliminary, investigation, into, heterogeneity, among, touring, travelers

### Disciplines

Business | Social and Behavioral Sciences

### Publication Details

Gountas, J., Dolnicar, S. & Gountas, S. (2011). Personality and motivation matter in touring holidays: a preliminary investigation into heterogeneity among touring travelers. *Tourism Analysis*, 16 (3), 329-342.

## PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION MATTER IN TOURING HOLIDAYS: A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION INTO HETEROGENEITY AMONG TOURING TRAVELERS

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Touring travelers represent a significant market in Australia and are expected to play an even larger role in the future. Yet, to date, they are viewed and treated like one large homogeneous market. The aim of the present study was to question this assumption and investigate whether distinct segments exist among touring travelers. Results, based on an empirical study of 430 Australian travelers, indicate that at least two distinct segments can be constructed which differ in travel motivations, sociodemographics, and personality characteristics. These findings can be used to segment and harvest the market of tourist travelers through the development of targeted products and marketing messages.

Key words: Touring; Motivation; Segmentation; Independent travel

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### Introduction

Domestic tourism in Australia has been affected by the global financial crisis and during 2007–2009 experienced a small decline. However, the overall domestic tourism expenditure is critical to the Australian economy: in 2009 it has contributed \$42 billion (Australian Government DRET, 2010) and holds the largest market share in Australian tourism, accounting for 69 million trips [as opposed to 5.5 million due to overseas inbound tourists, who spent \$4 billion in 2009 (Euromoni-

tor International, 2010)]. The overall tourism income in 2009 was \$66 billion, representing 4% of GDP.

Domestic and international inbound tourism has experienced a small decline during the global financial crisis, but the forecasts for the next 5 years suggest that there will be small growth, mainly for outbound overseas travel as the global economic upheavals improve. However, the strong domestic economic growth, the lower petrol prices in 2009, and the increased competition among low-cost air carriers have created more opportuni-

ties for cheaper travel. The availability of short- and long-haul flights by low-cost carriers and a renewed confidence among Australians about safety issues are likely to positively influence domestic and international travel. Due to the strong Australian dollar, an increasing number of people are able to travel internationally, at the expense of the domestic markets.

However, more consumers are opting to travel independently and in small groups or alone as opposed to taking organized tours (Euromonitor International, 2010). Independent travel is growing among both Australians traveling overseas and international visitors traveling to Australia. Growth can partly be explained by increased global travel connectivity, and partly by increased Internet search capabilities for information on travel products, safety issues in destinations, and travel options, and making all their travel bookings themselves. The trend towards independent travel is not limited to Australia, but it is very similar to most other developed travel markets around the world (Euromonitor International, 2010).

The large geographic size of Australia, and its distance from other regions, has led to a strong domestic tourism industry in Australia, with three times as many visitors as inbound international tourism. Furthermore, domestic tourists make up an even larger proportion of tourists to regional Australia, whereas international tourists generally ignore the regions outside of Sydney and coastal Queensland (Euromonitor International, 2010).

The touring market plays a major role in the Australian tourism industry and it is dominated by the domestic Australian tourism market (Tourism Research Australia, 2009). This is illustrated by the fact that, in the year ending March 2008, there were 8.3 million domestic Australian visitors who stayed in caravans or camping accommodation and accounted for 39.6 million of visitor nights. The average duration of their stay was 6 nights and the expenditure per visitor per trip was estimated to be AUS\$1268.00 or AUS\$10.141 billion from domestic visitors. The number of international visitor nights in caravans or camping accommodation in 2008 was 4.6 million, who on average spent \$13,212 for the total trip per visitor. However, the overall duration of stay for the international visitors was 68 nights as opposed to the

domestic visitor's 6 nights and therefore the overall international visitors' expenditure was far bigger (\$60,775 billion) than domestic visitors' expenditure (\$10,141 billion) (Tourism Research Australia, 2009).

These statistics on tourism expenditures and the size of the market indicate that the touring sector is both significant and attractive for the Australian economy. If the touring independent travel market is targeted more effectively, it could be used to strengthen Australian domestic tourism. One strategic option for harvesting markets more effectively is to investigate whether they represent one homogeneous market segment or whether different segments can be identified that could be catered for in a more targeted manner.

The aim of this study, therefore, was (1) to empirically investigate whether the independent touring market is heterogeneous among actual and potential touring travelers in Australia; and (2) to assess if there are distinct market segments, which are managerially meaningful and feasible for marketing activities purposes.

### Literature Review

Touring is not a new phenomenon. The European Grand Tour has had a direct influence on tourism to the present day. Towner (1985) defines it as the big tour of European places and cities of interest for young wealthy men for a number of purposes including entertainment and education. The key motives for touring were the interest to see and experience the cultural glories of the renaissance Italian cities, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, France, classical Greece, and the Low Countries. The motivation for acquiring knowledge, or the need to know and understand, was coupled with the passionate romantic desire to experience beautiful natural attractions, climb and see the highest European Alpine mountains, sail through the central European river and canal systems, enjoy the different seaside scenic resorts, and sample the different ways of living in Europe. Brodsky-Porges (1981) suggests that young wealthy Americans traveled to Europe during the era of 1600–1800s to expand their worldviews, gain knowledge, and develop better understanding of other cultures. Another motive was to learn how to be indepen-

dent and therefore transition into adulthood; to learn how to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, and able to interact with other nationalities. The American's grand tour to Europe was a form of affirming and gaining social status in their own society. Jakle (1981) and Brodsky-Porges (1981) proposed that less than 100 years ago the American contemporary social wisdom stressed that traveling to Europe was an essential part of a young person's education. European traveling experiences were considered one of the best ways to improve the education of young people who aspired to social mobility and improved career prospects. Americans considered European traveling as essential in order to experience more civilized cultures and therefore learn more refined ways of living and cast away some of their New World frontier mentality, which was characterized to be rather coarse, violent, and parochial.

The original notion and style of the grand tour has changed and evolved gradually during the 18th and 20th centuries, in line with the innovations in transport, improvement in safety, sanitation, and geopolitical and economic relations. Jakle (1981) suggests that touring in America has been an ongoing activity during the most times, in the 19th and 20th centuries continuing the broad traditions of the grand tour during the 16th–18th centuries. The advent of the motorcar, improvements of accessible roads, and the newfound spirit of adventure drove many Americans to travel in previously impossible and unheard of places of great distances across the North American continent. However, the mode of touring in the early 20th century has evolved gradually due to economic improvements and developments regarding accommodation and transport. As conditions improved, touring holidays evolved from traveling as "tin can tourists" (Jakle, 1981, p. 537) camping on the side of the roads and carrying with them all the necessary things to the more comfortable mode of travel by automobiles in well-organized campgrounds.

Hugill (1985) suggests that the car changed peoples' lives dramatically during the 20th century. More and more people took to the road and rediscovered many places, which famous and socially important people like artists and writers mentioned in their works. As car ownership be-

came more prevalent, the middle and lower classes emulated the elite American classes' grand tours. Marsh and Wall (1982) encapsulated the trend as "mass followed class" (p. 6). Car-based touring was motivated by their pursuit of adventure, to experience a more refined lifestyle, and the discovery of interesting places and people, which broaden their current horizons. During the later part of the 20th century, touring travelers were able to use motel accommodation and all kinds of transport including air transport when available and affordable.

However, the roots of independent touring and travel can be traced to even earlier times. During the period of 450–420 BC, Herodotus (1910/1964) the father of history, and many other classical Hellenic writers and philosophers, including Plato and Galen, provide extensive coverage of travel experiences throughout the known nations of Persia, Assyria, Phoenicia, and Egypt. Usually men of high social status during the Hellenic and Roman times traveled extensively throughout their known world, seeking adventures and knowledge, and exploring different cultures (Galen, 1916; Guthrie, 1986).

Adler (1989) carried out a comprehensive analysis, from postrenaissance 16th century to the present day, attempting to map out the major cultural values and socioeconomic changes, which influenced the overall travel ideology. Adler's thesis suggests that travel motives and activities fitted very well with each cultural era's values; for example, during the enlightenment period when the Europeans engaged in new scientific and political explorations the concurrent trends in travel were all about learning and studying other cultures, natural attractions, and the man-made historical world of European civilizations. Cultural exploration types of tours were the recommended activities for young wealthy British and American travelers who wanted to expand their education horizons and social standing. The postrenaissance fascination with taxonomy and cataloguing nature, historical, and cultural artifacts in Europe was taken up enthusiastically by amateur gentleman social scientists (anthropologists, historians, archaeologist, and social scientists). During the 18th and 19th centuries, the sociocultural ideological paradigm gradually evolved to become a more objective and

systematic exploration by pioneer scientists who searched for explanations and meanings in a more rigorous way in Europe and throughout the world (leading to the view of taking title of lands globally and colonize other countries). New socioeconomic groups with lower scientific interests followed and emulated the wealthier forerunner's exploring, joining the safer and totally organized packaged tours by Thomas Cook.

During the middle of the 20th century, post-1950s, the old ideology of cultural and educational travel fascination morphed into the contemporary sunlust and wanderlust types of global mass tourism. Some authors (Giddens, 1991; Habermas, 1987; Rojek & Urry, 1997) subscribe to the idea that contemporary tourism reflects the 21st century's Western urban residents' social need to get away from the industrialized mass-produced, commodification, and high-pressure lifestyle. Modern postindustrial consumers from different age and social groups look for more authentic lifestyle expressions and experiencing raw and unspoiled nature. Weiler and Hall (1992) suggest that tourism interests and leisure activities are a reflected microcosm of the broader postmodern sociocultural trends, attitudes, activities, interests, and ideologies that are taking place in most affluent Western societies. Opaschowski (2001) posits that the post-industrial tourists' primary travel motivation is to experience a variety of new emotions and feelings from the various activities they engage in as opposed to simply experiencing and gaining material or physical product-related benefits.

The backpacking segment of tourism has some similarities with touring holidays because it combines the independent and flexible mode of travel with being interested in nature, culture, and more personally authentic types of activities. Cohen (1972) is one of the early and most significant researchers who constructed a meaningful tourism typology based on young travelers' attitudes towards daily life and their motives for traveling. Cohen (1973) identified a group called *drifters and nomads*: predominantly young middle class travelers with more resources who are less interested in mass tourism (institutionalized or organized tourism), hold antiestablishment views towards their own mainstream culture, and seek adventure in exploring new cultures, authenticity,

novel experiences, self-development, and alternative lifestyles (Cohen, 1979). Vogt (1976) called these types of tourists *wanderers*. Adler (1985) labeled them *tramping youth*, and later Loker-Murphy and Pearce (1995) identified them from their form of travel as *backpackers*.

However, Uriely (2005) suggests that the *wanderers*, *backpackers*, or *drifters* are not a single homogenous group of tourists, but these seemingly independent types of tourists have different motives, are driven by different degrees of social dislocation and alienation, have different incomes and educational levels, and therefore are able to choose different types of holiday activities and modes of travel. The backpackers' or drifters' quest for exploring and discovering new untouched places, experiencing new cultures that have not been touched by the mass institutionalized commercially organized tourism industry has something in common with the free wondering spirit and curiosity for nature and the authentic cultural experiences of the independent touring holidaymakers. The backpacker phenomenon is a metaphor of freedom and mobility and it is a contemporary representation of a travel lifestyle in its own right (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004).

Independent touring holidaymakers' mode of transport is usually self-drive (Sivijs, 2003). They are different in their motives from the backpackers or drifters because they are independent travelers with different choices of activities and travel route requirements (Hardy, 2003); they tend to be couples of middle socioeconomic classes, more affluent, older, and seek out experiences that are intrinsically attractive (Olsen, 2002, 2003; Prideaux, Wei, & Ruys, 2001; Taylor & Prideaux, 2007). Self-drive independent touring holidaymakers seek better quality of travel product experiences because they can afford them and have more knowledge and travel-related maturity to make such decisions.

Independent touring holidaymakers, as a distinct market, have not been extensively researched and therefore there are a number of issues that need to be explored in more detail. Trauer (2006) conducted an extensive review of the different types of special interest tourism activities and attempted to develop a taxonomy of activities and motives. Trauer proposed that there is a continuum

of special interest tourism motives and activities, which is similar to an earlier framework by Brotherton and Himmetoglu (1997). Independent touring types of holidays fit into the continuum of special interest holidays because they combine a variety of travel modes, recreational activities that fit into the rubric of tourism and leisure holidays, and motivations that are in line with special interest and individualistic, mostly tailor-made, arrangements (not mass tourism).

Therefore, it is feasible to define touring as a separate type of holiday segment based on their behaviors, preferences for different touring activities, and touring motives, which are not the same as the broader organized mass tourism and backpacker tourism segments. The complex interplay of cultural and social values with individual personality and motivational differences make it possible to propose that within the independent touring market segment there are distinct groups of touring holidaymakers with heterogeneous forms of self-expressions (motives and personality traits) and preferences for touring activities and behavioral interests. The dynamic nature of macro- and microenvironmental forces influences the overall tourism consumer preferences and individual travel ideologies.

Postmodern tourists are products of their post-industrial era and of the contemporary ideology that ascribes to the lifestyles of being active, trying to do many different things in different cultural and natural settings; travel for multiple reasons, pursue many goals, be influenced by different values and ideologies, and engage in organized as well as independent touring holidays (Rojek & Urry, 1997). The literature review suggests that the postmodern travel consumer market is not homogenous because of the differences in motivational drives and behavioral preferences (Trauer, 2006).

The research on self-drive touring holidaymakers has focused on finding out and understanding demographic and behavioral characteristics. Uysal and Jurowski (1994) found that demographic characteristics, with the exception of gender differences, are not very good predictors of why consumers choose different types of tourism activities. Hyde and Laesser (2009) found that the freewheeling touring consumers are generally motivated by the

need to get away from all obligations, to have flexibility of travel, and to be able to spend time for themselves and with important other people. They prefer to experience a diversity of holiday destinations, with different attractions and activities. However, there is major gap in the literature because the psychological (e.g., personality) and motivational characteristics of the independent touring travelers have not been adequately explored. This article investigates the psychological differences of the touring travelers, attempting to understand their needs and psychological characteristics through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

The literature review leads to us to propose two hypotheses:

- H1: Touring independent travelers are not a homogenous market segment.
- H2: Personality and motivational (psychographic) characteristics differentiate the touring market segments.

### Methodology

A two-stage approach was taken. First, a qualitative study was conducted, which aimed at identifying a range of travel motives that may not be covered in the general travel motivation literature and may be specific to touring travelers. This was achieved by conducting 12 in-depth interviews with adults who participated in touring holidays. The snowballing sample for the 12 in-depth interviews comprised an equal number of males and females, mainly couples of middle-aged, middle-class men and women residing in Victoria, Australia. As a follow-up to the exploratory in-depth interviews, two focus groups were conducted in Victoria using a convenience sampling method. The focus groups participants were asked about their motives and types of activities they prefer doing when touring around.

The qualitative research findings reinforced the motives that the literature review provided and suggested that there are a number of specific holiday benefits that motivate touring consumers to take touring holidays. Specifically, the idea of exploring and spending a lot of time in natural environments—being in the “bush” as it is popularly known. These consumers like the idea of spending

more time away from built-up city environments with family and friends, doing a variety of things including socializing, fishing, boating, cycling, and walking. Being free to roam around and spending quality time connecting with other people is enjoyable for these tourists. They like exploring and satisfying their imagination and fantasy of what certain places are like (e.g., realizing the images of the outback and places of outstanding beauty around Australia). The opportunity to see more of the Australian natural environment (flora and fauna) and the local history of different places, which only a very small number of people have ever managed to visit, makes them feel like small time explorers and adventurers. Another finding from the qualitative phase was that consumers' personality characteristics appeared to influence the choice of the type of touring holiday activities. The qualitative research was conducted in Victoria during August–December 2006.

In addition to the exploratory qualitative research with consumers, a small number of informal in-depth interviews were conducted with five touring organizers and caravan distributors/sellers during the annual Touring & Caravanning Trade show in Melbourne in March and April of 2007.

Based on the consumer and industry distributor's exploratory qualitative research findings, a questionnaire was developed and pretested, which was subsequently used to collect data through a commercial marketing research company that runs a permission-based online research panel. The researchers specified the sampling criteria, which the commercial research company used to solicit the online survey participants. The sampling criteria included people from the state of Victoria with equal number of male and female participants, equal proportion of all socioeconomic groups, and equal proportions of age groups between 25 and 65 years old. In total, 430 valid responses were collected. The sample is considered to be valid and representative of the general touring population in Australia, because it includes all age and occupational groups that are typically found in similar studies with specified populations (Prideaux et al., 2001; Snepenger, King, Marshal, & Uysal, 2006). Of the 430 respondents, 305 had already undertaken a touring holiday in the past and 424 said they were planning to do so in the future.

Respondents were asked to indicate their motivations for touring holidays. The motivational items were sourced from the literature review and the qualitative research. The pilot study suggested that a list of 20 motives was adequate to capture the range of independent travelers. The final research questionnaire presented the 20 motivational items and participants were asked to indicate on a 7-point scale their extent of agreement with each motivation. The factor analysis, using Varimax rotation and Principal Components Analysis, produced four clearly distinguished factors, as seen in Table 1. The overall factor structure is very robust, because all factors produced acceptable internal reliability Cronbach alphas, which are above the recommended level of 0.70 (factor 1  $\alpha = 0.856$ , factor 2  $\alpha = 0.857$ , factor 3  $\alpha = 0.837$ , factor 4  $\alpha = 0.704$ ). The total variance explained by all our factors is 62.03%, which is considered to be at an acceptable level (see Table 1).

The main touring motivational factors can be interpreted as:

**Factor 1: The need for physical and mental relaxation** by getting away from everyday routine and feel free to do whatever they want.

**Factor 2: The need to do interesting, innovative, and different things** in natural surroundings, by being close to nature and experience all its unique characteristics.

**Factor 3: The need to spend more quality time socializing** with important others away from the normal urban environments, surrounded by beautiful nature.

**Factor 4: The need to expand personal horizons, challenge and learn new things, and have new experiences**, by discovering interesting historical facts and participating in new sporting and cultural activities.

Overall, independent touring consumers want to see more of the natural and less of the man-made attractions. They want to have new experiences, meaningful adventures, and feel free from everyday constraints and routines. To pursue personal growth and self-development through social interactions, cultural activities, and being able to do interesting and adventurous things in new environments is one of the core drivers and differentiation from all other organized types of holidays.



Table 1  
Motivational Factors for Independent Touring Travelers

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Mean	SD
Q10.13: To get away from the routines of everyday life	<b>0.835</b>				6.28	1.06
Q10.11: To mentally and physically relax and recharge my batteries	<b>0.822</b>				6.22	1.14
Q10.12: To have time for yourself/treat myself to a break	<b>0.800</b>				6.12	1.26
Q10.3: To be flexible and do whatever I want to do (do as I please)	<b>0.630</b>				6.15	1.19
Q10.2: To feel the freedom and adventure of touring around	<b>0.557</b>				6.03	1.18
Q10.14: To experience something adventurous/exciting/new	<b>0.555</b>	0.362			6.15	1.06
Q10.15: To simply do very little and enjoy the gypsy/touring life	<b>0.537</b>	0.302			5.55	1.55
Q10.16: To be with and have fun with my family, friends, & relatives	<b>0.479</b>				5.81	1.41
Q10.18: To have lots of touring holiday experiences to talk about		<b>0.818</b>			4.95	1.69
Q10.19: To learn how to become more self-confident/self-secure		<b>0.785</b>			4.48	1.85
Q10.20: To feel a sense of achievement and adventurous things		<b>0.754</b>			5.13	1.65
Q10.17: To socialize and enjoy the company of new people		<b>0.688</b>			5.39	1.44
Q10.10: To participate in various festivals/events (i.e., wine festivals)		<b>0.525</b>	0.402		4.97	1.60
Q10.8: To visit new places and learn about the local history, culture			<b>0.880</b>		5.85	1.20
Q10.9: To learn about new things and local attractions			<b>0.792</b>		5.95	1.11
Q10.7: To visit cultural attractions (e.g., museums, galleries, antiques)			<b>0.789</b>		5.24	1.52
Q10.1: To experience nature close up (plants and animals)			0.350	<b>0.701</b>	5.08	1.59
Q10.4: To do my leisure activities in natural surroundings				<b>0.676</b>	5.45	1.41
Q10.6: To do my favorite sports like cycling, riding, diving, etc.				<b>0.639</b>	3.70	1.80
Q10.5: To do a bit of fishing, sailing, swimming (e.g., water activities)				<b>0.594</b>	4.89	1.78
Cronbach's alpha scale reliability 0.856	0.857	0.837	0.704			
Variance (%) explained by all factors (total 62.03%)	20.413	16.930	13.299	11.387		
Eigenvalues for each factor	4.083	3.387	2.660	2.270		

The factor analysis (using varimax and principal components method) identified four robust and meaningful factors.

Independent touring holidaymakers appear to be more self-sufficient and risk takers because they rely on their own resources and make their own travel decisions independently.

Because the sample size was too small to carry out the data-driven segmentation (Dolnicar, 2004) using all 20 variables (Dolnicar, 2008; Formann, 1984), the motives were factor analyzed and eight original items representative of all four motivational factors were included into the segmentation base:

- to experience nature (plants and animals) close up;
- to be flexible and do whatever I want to do (do as I please);
- to do my favorite sports like cycling, riding, diving, etc.;
- to visit cultural attractions (e.g., museums, galleries, antiques);
- to get away from the routines of everyday life;
- to be with and have fun with my family, friends, and relatives;
- to socialize and enjoy the company of new people;

- to feel a sense of achievement and doing adventurous things.

Please note that original items were used for the segmentation analysis (as opposed to using factor scores in what is commonly referred to as "factor-cluster analysis") as recommended by Dolnicar and Grün (2008).

As for this particular analysis the intensity of agreement with these motives was not important; the variables were binarized with agreement coded as 1 and disagreement coded as 0. The neutral point was assigned the disagreement value because responses were found to be skewed towards the positive end of the answer spectrum.

In order to determine how many segments to extract from the motivation data, a recently proposed framework by Dolnicar and Leisch (2010) was used, which computes large numbers of replications for the number of cluster ranges selected using bootstrap samples of the data. This approach eliminates both sample and algorithm randomness and provides insight into which segment number can be reproduced most reliably and should there-

fore be chosen. For this particular analysis, the range of cluster numbers investigated was 2–10 and for each one of those cluster numbers 100 repeated computations were undertaken. Then the agreement across these repeated computations was computed using the Rand Index. In addition, respondents were asked questions related to socio-demographic information about them as well as questions about their travel behavior.

### Results

Results for the analysis of the most suitable number of clusters are provided in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 is a conventional bar chart of Rand indices, much like the typical scree plot used in segmentation studies. It indicates that the average stability across computations for the three- and the four-segment solution are the highest, with the four-segment solution leading to much lower variability in stability. These findings lead to the recommendation of four segments.

Given the clear recommendations with respect to the number of clusters, the four-segment solution was chosen. The profile of the four segments is provided in Figure 2, where the bars indicate the average values for each segment and the line with the dot at the end indicates the total sample average. Segments were interpreted by comparing their profile with the average sample profile. As

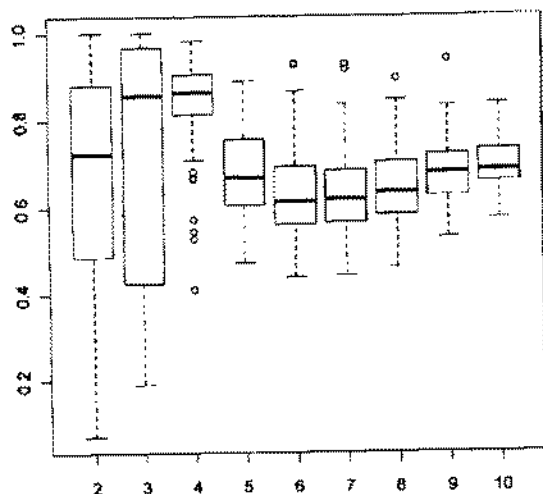


Figure 1. Bar chart of Rand indices.

can be seen, of the four segments, two demonstrated an "all higher than average" and an "all lower than average" profile. The suspicion that this was a manifestation of response styles was confirmed by assessing their responses to other questions. As a consequence, two distinct market segments remained that were studied in detail: Segment 1 and Segment 3. Both segments coincidentally contain 119 respondents or 28% of the sample.

Segment 1 can be characterized as being particularly motivated by experiencing nature, culture, socializing, and enjoying the interaction with new people. Segment 3 is motivated not only by meeting new people but also by having fun with family, friends, and relatives.

Both segments are motivated by a sense of achievement and doing adventurous things, the flexibility of doing whatever they want, and the fact that they get away from the routines of everyday life. Neither of the two segments is motivated by sports activities.

In addition to the segmentation base, differences between segments were tested with respect to additional information available about them. Chi-square tests were used for nominal variables and analyses of variance for metric variables. Only members of Segments 1 and 3 were included in the testing of background variables to avoid distortion of  $p$ -values by the response style segments.

Significant differences were found with respect to age, indicating that the touring travelers in Segment 1 are significantly ( $\chi^2 p < 0.025$ ) older than the members in Segment 3. One third of Segment 3 members are older than 66 years, one fifth of Segment 1 members are between 18 and 30 years old.

Significant differences were also identified with respect to having taken a touring holiday in the past 5 years: 80% of Segment 1 members have taken a touring holiday, but only 67% of Segment 3 members ( $\chi^2 p < 0.021$ ). Segment 1 members more frequently undertake a touring holiday with a car towing a caravan (28% as opposed to only 17% among members of Segment 3;  $\chi^2 p < 0.028$ ); and more of them stay in caravan parks (58% as opposed to 45% among Segment 3 members;  $\chi^2 p < 0.034$ ). Also, a higher proportion of members of Segment 3 are

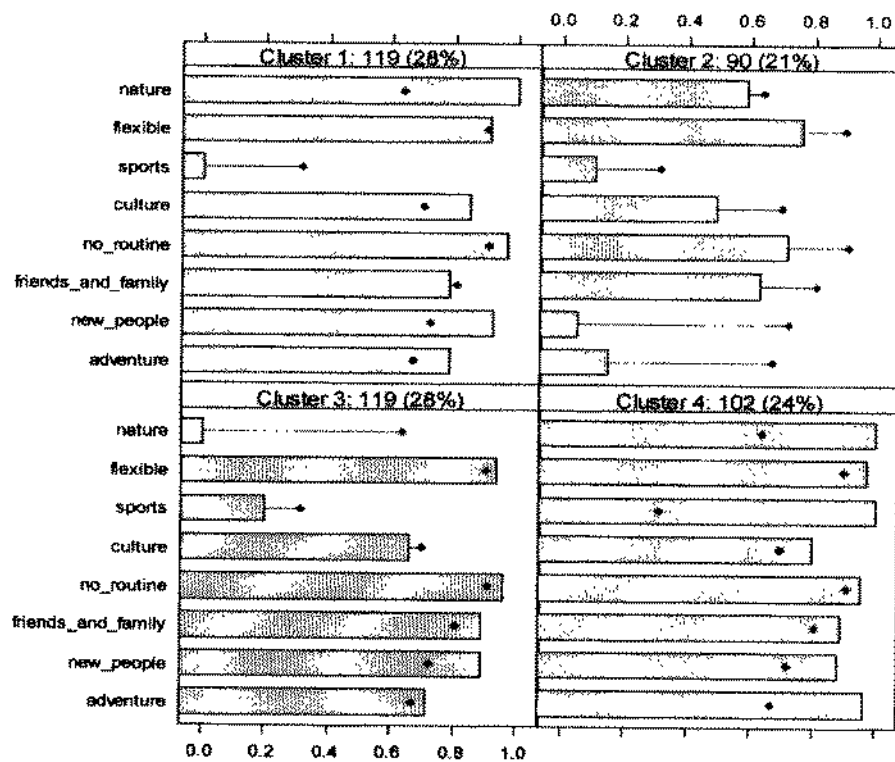


Figure 2. Profile of resulting motivation segments.

on the road for more than 22 nights (25% as opposed to 15%; chi-square  $p < 0.049$ ).

With respect to their pretrip information behavior, only one significant difference was identified between these two segments: touring members of Segment 1 pay more attention to media advertising in newspapers and magazines (55% as opposed to 43% in Segment 3; chi-square  $p < 0.040$ ).

These results indicate that the two segments (cluster 1 and 2) are distinct with respect to psychometric variables (motives and personality preferences) included in the segmentation base, as well as according to their behavioral and geodemographic characteristics (Table 2). The two segments are distinctly different in their travel behavior preferences (length of tour, frequency of touring and mode of transport, sources of travel information, and types of accommodation), which is of interest to marketers in view of market reachability. The size of both market segments is sufficiently large (28% of the market of each segment)

to justify specific marketing targeting campaigns by tourism marketers. The sociodemographic characteristics play an important role such as age, which is critical for identifiability of the different market segments through their media behavior, which is relevant for market reachability and communications tactics through general and specific media tools.

#### Managerial Implications and Conclusions

The aim of the present study was to test the hypothesis that touring travelers are heterogeneous and to identify the differentiating psychological and geodemographic characteristics of different segments of touring travelers. Based on both the qualitative and quantitative research, the findings indicate that there are distinct touring motivational segments, which also differ according to behavioral and sociodemographic variables.

The main research findings concerning the mo-

Table 2

Summary of the Two Segment's (Clusters 1 and 3) Characteristics

Segment 1 (Cluster 1, Size 28%): Experienced Nature and Culture Touring Adventurers	Segment 2 (Cluster 3, Size 28%): Middle-Aged Family Socializers
Prefer to explore nature, culture, socializing, and enjoying the interaction with new people	Prefer touring to interact with new people and having fun with family, friends, and relatives
Motivated by achievement and being adventurous; like the flexibility of doing whatever they want (freedom of movement) and need to get away from the routines of everyday life	Motivated by achievement and adventures; prefer the flexibility of doing whatever they want (freedom to act and be wherever they want to) and get away from the routines of everyday life
Older age groups as well as 20% are very young (18–30 years old); more travel with a car towing a caravan and more stay in caravan parks	Middle aged (younger than cluster 1); fewer travel with a car towing a caravan and fewer stay in caravan parks
Most of touring holidaymakers (80%) have taken a touring holiday on the past; they are influenced by media advertising in newspapers and magazines	Fewer (67%) of cluster 3 members have previously been on touring holidays; travel more independently, tour more than 22 nights in various accommodation places

tives of the touring holidaymakers which resulted from both the qualitative and quantitative investigations conducted, clearly suggest that touring holidaymakers are not following the predominant social trend for mass type of travel, because they are very individualistic. Touring holidaymakers have strong preferences and a need for physical, mental, and emotional relaxation and get away from everyday routine, to do interesting or new (innovative and different) things in natural surroundings; to be close to and experience nature in all its manifestations; spend more time socializing with important others. They are interested in exploring and expanding their personal horizons by learning new things, discovering interesting historical sites, and experiencing personal interaction in a variety of social, cultural, and physical activities. Overall, touring consumers want to experience firsthand nature and have meaningful adventures. Personal growth and development through social interactions, being able to succeed in new environments, and being more self-sufficient are a major part of the touring repertoire of motives and benefits they seek out. Tourism management needs to consider effective ways of communicating these important benefits that touring consumers are seeking and as well as needing to escape away from their everyday routine and go towards unknown places and new adventures.

Most of the touring holidaymakers in our study see touring as the opportunity to wander around,

roam free through many places, visit new towns, attractions, and parks, and be able to stay as long as they wish, doing the things that they love doing with other people. The essential ingredients of a good touring route must be met; for example, good signposting for independent touring travelers in order to navigate safely to their chosen destinations. All other travel ingredients, like good sources of information before and during the trip, must be easily accessible; availability of good quality of accommodation, eateries, and all the other services that motoring and independent holidaymakers need must be provided according to the customer's needs (Hardy, 2003; Olsen, 2003). The perceived degree of attractiveness and interesting touring attributes (man-made or natural) are the main reasons why consumers in Segment 1 choose to travel independently and engage in adventurous activities (Taylor & Prideaux, 2007). Touring holidaymakers are comfortable with taking moderate/manageable risks and doing new things (innovators and explores). Given that the essential infrastructure for touring holidays is in place, marketing managers ought to focus on attracting different market touring market segments, emphasizing and matching the specific product attributes (nature or man-made attractions and adventures) with the needs of each touring segment. Motives, personality, behavioral and demographic characteristics are important factors that influence asymmetrically different touring consumers and therefore tourism

destinations need to look for the best fit strategies to attract the appropriate customers.

As a whole, touring holidaymakers appear to be more independent minded and have different needs regarding social interactions, including family, friends, relatives, and other people in general. Segment 2, the "Middle aged family socializers," has a higher need to express and satisfy their social needs. Therefore, they are interested in social interactions, but they seem to be interested in spending more quality time with their family members, friends, and relatives than Segment 1, which is more interested in exploring nature, culture, and socializing with other people they meet on touring.

Both segments are interested in flexible travel arrangements pursuing adventures and exploring interesting places because they need to feel a sense of achievement and accomplishment at the end of their tour. However, Segment 1, the "Experienced nature and culture touring adventurers," is more experienced in touring because they have taken/participated in more touring holidays, using their car to tow a caravan, and therefore they feel more capable to manage the challenges of traveling to new places (multidestination touring routes). Segment 1 is more likely to be the gray nomads as well as the very young adventurers who are interested in discovering new places, doing new things (cultural and social activities), and therefore they share some of the traits of the original travel pioneers and explorers.

Segment 2 is more likely to be the more affluent middle-aged families with kids traveling with other friends and spending longer than 3 weeks on their touring holidays. Both segments are more likely to be allocentrics and risk takers and therefore tourism managers can find creative ways to promote their less frequently visited destinations and design their facilities to appeal to these segments (being in the introduction and growth stage of a resort life cycle).

The decision-making process of independent touring travelers is of great significance to tourism marketers because it influences the design of tourism products, positioning of the destination, communication tactics, and the type of service delivery. Touring destinations are as important as the

actual touring and traveling around in between the touring nodes/places.

The research data suggest that independent touring holidaymakers are diverse in the motivations for the different behaviors and activities they choose to do. Overall, our study found that touring travelers come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. However, there is a higher proportion of touring consumers who are middle aged and above, are well educated, and are mostly skilled or professional people. They prefer to drive from one destination to another, they like the flexibility and freedom to choose the places they go to, and the average length of stay varies according to the market segment. Tourism managers, therefore, must provide very good quality of a wide range of information using mass media, Internet sites, local TIC, and word-of-mouth type of promotions. Touring holidaymakers are a heterogeneous market segment with diverse interests for a wider range of activities from many other types of organized type of holidaymakers (packaged holidays). Tourism destination managers need to find ways to cater for the heterogeneous touring needs focusing on the pull and push factors and therefore they should provide opportunities for travelers to make individually and independent touring itineraries with the opportunity for service product cocreation with the tourism suppliers in order to meet more effectively their particular needs.

The analysis has identified two clear segments, which can be targeted effectively because the study has identified their demographic and psychographic profiles. One of the key marketing objectives is to influence touring consumers' decisions by using appropriately targeted and customized communication messages. Marketing companies specializing in independent touring products can develop and target appropriately clearly differentiated tourism products and services, which are needed by the touring market segments identified in our research. Touring product and service providers as well as all the intermediary services such as tourism information centers can focus their promotional tactics to cater for the varied and differentiated needs of the touring consumers prior and during their travel purchases. Touring destination market positioning needs to take into account the differentiated market segments' perceptions and

benefits that touring consumers seek. Greater understanding of the reasons why touring consumers travel, the benefits they seek out, and who they are in terms of age, income, and ability to travel is vitally important for commercial and public sector tourism destination marketing organizations.

There is a growing mobile population in the Western world that moves for various reasons from one place to another (Clifford, 1997), characterized by a restless attitude that seeks to understand other cultures and new lifestyles. Independent tourists who tour around from place to place are part of this mobile global tribe, which is interested in exploring and understanding different cultures and have exciting experiences. Our research findings suggest that the independent touring travelers are interested to participate in small-scale and lower level of dangerous or risky activities. Therefore, they are similar to the classic explorers of the grand tour (albeit less wealthy and less concerned with social advancement status). Independent touring holidaymakers logically and empirically supported appear to be part of the lower end of the explorer/discover and pioneer type of continuum. Depending on the resources available and psychological characteristics some touring travelers could fit into the group of the extreme explorers and pioneers like Jason and Argonauts, Columbus, and Sir Edmund Hillary.

According to Westerhausen (2002), modern tourists travel because they experience social alienation and dissatisfaction with everyday work, lifestyle, and leisure routine. These push factors drive many people towards the pursuit of the exotic, exciting, and independent backpacking type of traveling to explore and experience other new, unknown, and life-transforming new destinations (Cohen, 1973). Touring holidaymakers do not seem to fit into this category of socially alienated or dissatisfied with their own life and culture, because they are happy to travel domestically and enjoy socializing and interacting with other people, including family and friends. The research findings suggest that touring travelers seem to be socially integrated because social interactions form an integral part of their travel experience. Sharing and seeking out social interactions with family, friends, and new acquaintances is pivotal to the independent touring market segment's motivation to travel.

MacCannell (1976, 1992) suggests that tourism experiences have become an iconic representation of the contemporary Western rootlessness, and alienation of modern life. Touring travelers visit a variety of natural and man-made destinations, which are different from their everyday urban environments, in an attempt to find and construct meaning in their modern Western lifestyles. Independent touring holidays provide an opportunity to visit and experience raw nature, real historical sites that represent actual historical experiences, and participate in authentic interactions with like-minded people because they are seeking more real and immediate emotional, physical, and intellectual experiences. Consumers seek out places of differentiation and distinction in order to satisfy their own need for being unique with an authentic self-identity.

This study is considered to be a preliminary investigation into the heterogeneity among touring travelers because it is the first of its kind in the context of the Australian tourism market. A retest of this study in another comparable market would be useful to develop a clearer framework and theory of the touring consumer's psychographic and demographic characteristics. The study provides a very useful basis to expand the investigation of the touring holidaymakers market but it has some limitations, which are: (1) the sample size is relatively small, especially for testing differences between segments using demographic variables. Consequently, it was not possible to Bonferroni-correct the *p*-values, which should be done in a follow-up study to ensure differences are not overestimated. (2) The present sample contained respondents who have in the past 5 years been touring as well as those who expressed that they would tour in future. In a follow-up study it would be interesting to collect a larger sample of those tourists only who have been touring. (3) The nature of the data collection led to a large proportion of respondents displaying response styles. It would be interesting to repeat the study using other than online data collection methods to exclude this as a source of response styles.

#### Acknowledgments

John and Sandra Gountas have developed the motivation scale used in this study and were lead-

ing the empirical touring research project in the course of which the empirical data were collected. Sara Dolnicar conducted the segmentation analysis.

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